DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Maiteen Pillai, you may remember the question of the provision of a shed and a crane at the market landing place at Changanachery came up last year also and upon that the Chief Engineer called upon the Divisional Officer to prepare an estimate. But the Divisional Officer has not sent up the estimate. I shall ask the Chief Engineer peremptorily to call upon the Divisional Officer to send up the estimate.

As regards the Alleppey-Changanachery canal, there is a provision of Rs. 15,000 in the budget for the work this year and the question of its construction will be undertaken on receipt of a report called for from the Land Revenue Commissioner. He has not yet submitted his reply.

Your request that the present site of the Travellers' Bungalow should be converted into a public maidan, is a suggestion that I shall consider in consultation with the Chief Engineer and the Land Revenue Commissioner.

As regards the separation of the functions of the Munsiff-Magistrate, that arrangement is only in the nature of an experiment and it looks very much as though that experiment is going to prove a failure. On the 25th Makaram last, there were 343 criminal cases, 604 civil cases, 36 miscellaneous and 60 small cause cases awaiting disposal at the court. That is far too much for one Munsiff-Magistrate to dispose of and the High Court is now considering the question of a different arrangement.

129. Needs of the Meenachil taluk.

MR. JOSEPH THOMAS (*Member, Meenachil taluk, Group II*) said that Meenachil, in spite of its importance in various ways, was receiving only a niggardly treatment at the hands of Government. Out of the enormous allotments made every year for education, medical aid etc., Meenachil was getting only an infinitesimally small share. The Budget allotments for the current year itself would bear out this statement. The allotment for Education for instance in the current year's Budget was well nigh Rs. 45½ lakhs. But what did Meenachil get out of this big amount? At Palai, the chief town in Meenachil, there were two Sirkar schools, a vernacular middle school for boys and a vernacular middle school for girls. Both these schools were in very poor condition. The girls' school building was in thorough disrepair and might break down at any moment. The premises of the school were narrow and very near the public road. But no one cared to improve the school building or to extend its premises.

Similarly, Government were spending about 9¾ lakhs of rupees for the Medical and Sanitary Departments. But Meenachil was not benefited by this prodigious expenditure. The supply of medicines in the hospitals and dispensaries in the taluk was very poor, and most of the hospitals were under-manned. In the Lalam hospital, for example, there was always a number of women patients attending; but there was no lady doctor and there were no nurses in the hospital. So far as the Sanitary Department was concerned, they could at least keep the Meenachil town neat and clean and arrange for the lighting of the streets.

In regard to the Judicial Department again, the only two institutions of that department in the Meenachil taluk were a Second Class Magistrate's court and a Munsiff's court. The Munsiff's court was housed in a rented building where there was no accommodation either for clients or for vakils. More than all, the number of cases in the taluk justified the establishment of a District Court. Instead of increasing the number of judges in the Kottayam District Court, a District Court should be established at Meenachil.

The Agricultural Department was another of the important departments in the taluk. But this department which had opened many demonstration farms in other parts of the State had no demonstration farm in Meenachil. Meenachil was a taluk reputed for cocoanuts and pepper, but the Agricultural Department had done nothing to combat the infection which had caught the cocoanut and pepper plantations in the taluk.

So far as the Public Works Department was concerned, the allotment in the Budget of 1103 for the Meenachil taluk was only Rs. 5,420. The member urged

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that the following ryots' roads in the taluk should be taken over by Government and repaired and made fit for cart traffic by constructing the necessary bridges, culverts etc. :—

(1) Uzhavur-Marangattupilli road ;

(2) the road from Atirampuzha-Lalam road, 8th mile, to Lalam-Kaduthuruthi road, *via* Kadaplamattam ;

(3) the road from Lalam-Ramapuram road, 1st mile, to Kuruchitanam, *via* Valavur, Kudakachira etc;

(4) the road from Lalam-Ramapuram road, 1st mile, to Lalam-Ramapuram road at Vellilapalli, *via* Karurpallikal ;

(5) the road from Lalam-Todupuzha road, 6th mile, to Ramapuram road, *via* Ezhacheri, Marangad, etc;

(6) the road from Atirampuzha-Lalam road, 8th mile, to Anikad road, *via* Kidangur, Mattakara etc;

(7) the road from Puliyannur-Vazhur road, 7th mile, to the Atirampuzha-Lalam road, 9th mile.

In addition to the above, the following Sirkar roads should be made cartable :—

(1) the road from Erattupetta to the Antinad-Melukavu road ;

(2) the road from Plasanal to Mankompu ;

(3) the Antinad-Melukavu road ;

(4) the road from near the Puliyannur camp-shed to the front of the Meenachil taluk cutcherry ; and

(5) the trace from the head of the Lalam-Ponkunnam road to the Kidangur temple.

The member next spoke on the absence of a timber depot at Palai. The people of Meenachil had now to go to Parampuzha, 16 miles away, to buy timber. They were thus put to much unnecessary expenditure. A timber depot should therefore be opened at Meenachil, and till that was done timber should be auctioned at Palai three or four times a year.

In conclusion the member urged that Meenachil being one of the foremost places in Travancore where the temperance movement was set on foot with great vigour, the experiment of 'local option' should be tried there at once. The proposal of Government to try the experiment at Changanachery, where so much opposition had already come into play against temperance, was looked upon with suspicion by many people. Whether 'local option' succeeded or failed at Changanachery, it would certainly succeed in Meenachil, and it should be tried there.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Joseph Thomas, there seems to be some mistake somewhere in the list because in the list of subjects here the P. W. D. and Forest Departments alone are shown and you referred to Agriculture, Education and other Departments. There are many points taken up in your representation. However, I shall deal with such of them as I possibly can.

As to the small number of schools, whether that is because other agencies are already largely at work or whether there is still room for more institutions, the matter is one which I shall refer to the Director of Public Instruction and I shall ask him to go to the spot at an early date and look into the whole educational needs of Minachil.

I shall ask the Director of Agriculture to take an early opportunity of visiting Minachil taluk and seeing how far he can go to assist the people and discuss matters on the spot.

In regard to the Medical Department, I think your principal complaint is with regard to shortage of medicines. I think there are a few doctors who show a tendency to hoard up medicines, just in the same way as some people hoard money. This is I believe out of fear that on some day there will be deficit of medicine. I shall ask the Administrative Board to see that Minachil, along with other hospitals and dispensaries, is fully equipped with an adequate supply of medicines so that there may not be a possible shortage of medicines.

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Now we come to the all important subject of roads. You say that there is only a provision of Rs. 5,000 in the budget for this year. I think you take only new works and if you look at the incomplete works as well, there is a good deal more. For instance I will refer to one item, a bridge over the Lalom-Ponkunnam road. Rs. 46,000 has been sanctioned and Rs. 10,700 has been spent in 1101, Rs. 15,000 in 1102, and Rs. 15,000 in 1103. As a matter of fact, I understand that the work is being pushed rapidly through as you said yourself. No doubt, there are many bridges in which money could be spent. But the pressure on the Department of Public Works is so great that they find it difficult to cope with all at the same time. The Chief Engineer proposes to draw up a working programme and when that programme comes up he will do what he can with regard to Minachil.

There are several roads here in the list. I will go over them as quickly as I can. Some of these matters require to be investigated. In regard to the Marangattupalli-Uzhavur road, that has to be investigated.

In regard to the road from Atirampuzha-Lalom road, 4th mile, to the Marangattupalli road, the road has been taken over for maintenance and estimates for the improvement of the bank are under preparation. So too with the extension of the road from Gudalloor to Marangattupalli.

In regard to the Erattupetta-Melukavu road, the estimates are now being prepared.

As regards the Plasanal-Mankompu road the Chief Engineer states that this road is 4 miles long and has been taken over for maintenance and that the road is full of steep gradients.

In regard to the road from the Lalom-Todupuzha road, 4th mile, to Melukavu, the Chief Engineer says that the length of the road is six miles and that three miles have been improved and made fit for carts and that the rest of the road will be improved in the course of this year.

As regards the conversion of the ryots' road and assumption of the same by Government the road from the Lalom-Ramapuram road, 1st mile, to the Marangattupalli-Uzhavur road, there are certain deviations to be made in the road as cut by the people. As soon as these deviations are carried out the question of taking them up for maintenance will be considered.

With regard to the Lalam-Ramapuram road, 1st mile, to Vellilapalli the difficulty was that some of the people would not give land free. These lands are being acquired. Meanwhile the estimates for culverts are under preparation.

As regards the Atirampuzha-Lalom road, it has got to be inspected before it is taken up. So too with the Kozhuvanal-Cherppunkal road.

As regards the opening of a new road from the Puliyannur T. B. along the trace to the Minachil taluk cutcherry, if the people will surrender the land free the P. W. D. will take up the question of the construction of the road.

In regard to the road from the head of Lalom-Ponkunnam road to the Kidangur temple, the Chief Engineer is having estimates for the second and third sections and as soon as they are scrutinised sanction will be accorded.

For the Forest Depot at Palai, the Conservator intends to take an early opportunity to come to Minachil and enquire into the location of the Depot.

130. Needs of the Todupuzha taluk.

MR. K. A. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Member, Todupuzha taluk*) spoke on the following needs of the Todupuzha taluk :—

(1) (*a*) The local dispensary should be converted into a district hospital. This was a subject which was brought before the Assembly on several occasions, but nothing was done yet.

(*b*) New dispensaries should be opened at Kudyatur and Karimannur.

(2) (*a*) An additional shed should be constructed in the local English school.

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